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Aug. 20, 1951

City manager

Richmond, Calif.

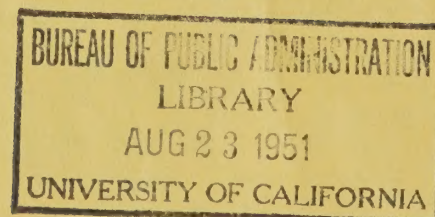
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CITY OF RICHMOND

BUDGET MESSAGE

1951 - 1952

H39111 Richmond, Calif.



Submitted to the City Council  
by  
Wayne E. Thompson  
City Manager

August 20, 1951

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Aug. 20, 1957

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## I N D E X

<u>Subject</u>	<u>Page</u>
Auditorium and Art Center.....	1
Capital Depreciation.....	2
Vehicle Replacement Fund	
Rental vs. Ownership	
Capital Improvements.....	3
Sewage Disposal Site	
Carpenter Shop at Corporation Yard	
Grade Separation Fund	
Civil Defense.....	3
Harbor Maintenance.....	3
Housing and Community Expansion.....	4
Wildcat Canyon	
Insurance.....	4
Library Fund.....	4
New Revenue Sources and Expenditure Controls.....	4
Parks, Playgrounds, Parking.....	5
Aquatic Park	
Pending Projects.....	5
Off-Street Parking	
One-Way Streets	
Shoreline Development	





<u>Subject</u>	<u>Page</u>
Pensions.....	6
Pension Chart.....	7
Police Court.....	8
Public Health.....	8
Redevelopment Agency.....	8
Salaries and Personnel.....	8
School Fund.....	8
Telephone Costs.....	9
Water Hydrants.....	9
Conclusion.....	9





August 20, 1951

Honorable Mayor and Members of  
the Richmond City Council

Gentlemen:

In preparing this annual budget message to your Honorable Body, all consideration has been given to your wishes that no additional tax burden be placed upon our home and property owners. To accomplish this end and to meet rising inflationary costs, it has been necessary to institute tight restrictions on municipal spending for the 1951-1952 fiscal year.

As a result of this consideration and study of municipal operations it is interesting to note that it will be:

1. Unnecessary to raise taxes for the sixth consecutive year, and
2. Possible to decrease taxes for the second consecutive year.

In 1940, property owners of the City contributed 81% of the total revenue received that was used to operate our city government as compared to a contribution of 47% for the year 1950. This reduction was accomplished by spreading the tax base over a wider area to include revenue from business licenses and sales taxes also aided by property improvements and industrial development. This policy of reducing the taxation burden on our home and property owners will be continued through research and exploration of all avenues of legitimate income sources.

#### Auditorium and Art Center

The dedication of the Auditorium and Art Center last April saw our residents not only acquiring the finest facility of its kind in the nation but also a place where they can gather and enjoy a great variety of civic, cultural and recreational activities. To augment the possibilities of supporting the Art program it is intended to meet with the School Board at an early date to discuss coordination of classroom activities with art center functions.

The operation of our auditorium is governed by an ordinance which places strong emphasis on its role as a service to the community. This policy will be followed to the extent, if necessary, of turning down private promotional ventures if a date is requested for a community activity. It is felt that our people shall have the first opportunity to avail themselves of the advantages afforded by the Auditorium over promotions that are conducted for private gain.

On the subject of auditorium operation, we must be prepared to adjust our sights to realistic conditions. The auditorium may very well wind up with a ten to twenty thousand dollar deficit at the end







of next year. In 1950, for instance, the Richmond Plunge had almost a thirty thousand dollar operating deficit. Most definitely our policy is to eventually be able to regain our operating expenses from annual revenues. The Public Administration Service of Chicago recently investigated thoroughly all auditoriums in the country, reaching the conclusions that: most auditoriums operate at a loss in their early years and even among those that are established, 55% expect a loss each year. They further state that the most successful auditoriums often are those that consistently show a loss, but that this loss is more than offset by the over-all benefits the auditorium brings to the community.

Our auditorium expects to serve between 250,000 to 300,000 persons in the coming year. The Art Center classes, which are available to all residents, will probably serve 24,000 persons and an additional 20,000 will probably visit art exhibits and other art activities. The city Auditing Department has figured that based upon average city valuation, the interest and redemption bond cost for the Auditorium and Art Center combined is but  $4\frac{1}{2}$  cents a week to the homeowner.

Our auditorium stands ready to bring more business into the community. Our newly-organized convention bureau, well aware of this ideal convention facility and of the \$24.00 per day usually spent by each convention delegate, already has secured small conventions geared to the limitations of our hotels and motels. Of interest at this point are the figures showing how the convention delegate dollar is spent in the community: 26% - retail stores; 24% - restaurants; 20% - hotels; 12% - garages; 10% - transportation; 6% - tobacco, flowers, etc; 2% - entertainment.

A definite stumbling block that will have to be overcome before we can qualify as a successful convention city is a lack of adequate first class hotel accommodations. A great deal of thought must be given to this problem if we intend to capitalize on the facilities we have to offer.

Auditorium capital improvements for the coming year will consist of necessary furnishings and equipment that must be provided to properly conduct scheduled productions and programs, together with an allowance to locate a changeable letter signboard on U. S. Highway 40.

#### Capital Depreciation

The proposed budget provides for the setting aside of \$10,000 into the Vehicle Replacement Fund, from which vehicles will be retired and replaced at the most economical time.

During the year a study was undertaken to determine whether or not it would be advisable to rent or to buy our police cars. This report pointed to many factors favoring city ownership, among



of next year. In 1950, for instance, the Richmond Plunge had a most a thirty thousand dollar operating deficit. Most definitely our policy is to eventually be able to regain our operating expenses from annual revenues. The Public Administration Service of Chicago recently investigated thoroughly all auditoriums in the country, passing the conclusion that: most auditoriums operate at a loss in their early years and even among those that are established, 50% expect a loss each year. They further state that the most successful auditoriums often are those that consistently show a loss, but that this loss is more than offset by the over-all benefits the auditorium brings to the community.

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#### Capital Requisition

The proposed budget provides for the setting aside of \$10,000 into the Vehicle Replacement Fund, from which vehicles will be purchased and replaced at the most economical time.

During the year a study was undertaken to determine whether or not it would be advisable to rent or to buy our police cars. This report pointed to many factors favoring city ownership, among



which were heavy mileage and its effect on rate-per-mile rental costs, better control of maintenance and upkeep. Outstanding among the factors favoring municipal ownership were that of the economies and conveniences of vehicle repair operations through the facilities of our centralized Corporation Yard. Furthermore, vehicles and parts are now standardized, affording a minimum investment in inventory.

### Capital Improvements

Tangible progress can be measured when a community can point to a program showing plans and accomplishments for the expansion and modernization of its facilities. Many such contemplated projects are discussed at greater length elsewhere in this message. For instance a few additional items that Richmond can point to are:

The setting aside of an additional \$25,000 to cover the purchase of the Terrace site, bringing closer to realization the much needed sewage disposal plant.

The investment of \$10,000 for a modern, safe, corrugated carpenter shop building at our Corporation Yard.

An additional \$40,000 for our grade separation fund.

### Civil Defense

Our civil defense activities have grown substantially during the past year and expenditures have been principally those of organization, construction, recruitment and training. A great deal of recognition and commendation has been given our City's approach to this emergency situation by leaders in our State Government.

This new year's allocation is to prepare ourselves for an entirely new chapter in this program -- that of radiological defense, more extensive and intensive training, the possibility and necessity of procurement of medical, rescue supplies and equipment

The over-all financing of the country's civil defense activities is still in a state of uncertainty but there are indications that the definite financial obligations that must be assumed by the State and Federal Governments is being given more serious consideration by those bodies. Their final actions will determine the speed with which our civil defense program develops and will directly affect the rate of city expenditures.

### Harbor Maintenance

In accordance with a suggestion made by Mr. Francis P. Healey on February 19, 1951, acting in capacity as special counsel for the City on the Parr lease, we are not allowing any funds in next year's budget for harbor maintenance. This suggestion is as follows:



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"I do suggest, at this time, in connection with this matter, that no levy of taxes be made hereafter by the City which includes therein anticipated revenues to be, when received, used for 'Maintenance' of leasehold premises or for payment or refund to Lessee of any street improvements assessed against either the Lessee's property or the lease property."

A supplemental opinion will be rendered shortly on this subject by Mr. Healey. The question involved concerns "the right of the City to engage in a binding contract of lease which obligates the City, in the year of its execution and in future years, to levy taxes and make payments to Lessee for street or other assessments and for maintenance of facilities on the leased property."

#### Housing and Community Expansion

An allowance made in last year's budget of \$50,000 as a down payment on the purchase of 2,500 acres of Wildcat Canyon property has reverted to the General Fund because of negotiations now under way to dispose of this property to private interests.

#### Insurance

Due to the effective job being done by the City employees' Accident and Prevention Investigation Committee, a refund was received amounting to \$21,000. Accordingly, our allowance in the budget for this item for the coming year has been decreased in the sum of \$9,000 for all insurance and \$12,000 for employees compensation insurance.

#### Library Fund

An increase of 2.8% has been allowed this fund making the per capita cost in our city approximately \$1.61. This figure compares very favorably with per capita costs in other cities in relation to the services rendered to our citizens.

#### New Revenue Sources and Expenditure Controls

We have been watching with interest various trends in the financial operation of our City since 1940. Revenue from our property tax is decreasing, as was pointed out in the beginning of this message. California cities in general, in fact, have come to depend more upon aids from other units of government and upon supplementary revenues.

Cities lack the broad tax base of the state and nation and oftentimes are incapable of producing income adequate to satisfy a growing demand for more and more services. Construction costs, living costs, and commodity prices all affect directly the cost of providing government services.





In order to balance our own governmental costs, we seek the solution in a combination of two factors: economy in government and new or stand-by revenue sources. With adequate assistance the following lines of thought can be explored.

We face a definite need for improvement of our financial control on a performance budget basis. Long range planning is a must for the determination of future functions, revenues, debt, and capital improvements. Performance budgeting translates a financial statement into a financial plan. The 1949 Hoover report recommended the re-fashioning of the federal government's budgetary concept based upon functions, activities, and projects. Such a budget focuses attention on work to be done and services to be rendered, rather than upon the things to be acquired. Some cities are following this system with remarkable results and savings.

Much thought has been and will have to be given to the consideration of obtaining additional revenues.

Possible revenue sources that should be studied are: gross receipts tax, sewer rental charges, increases in fines, the Pennsylvania and Ohio municipal income tax, and charges for special services

#### Parks, Playgrounds and Parking

Our policy of continued park development will be followed in order to provide the finest in park and parking facilities for the people of Richmond. This program calls for earmarking the sum of \$58,000 to be used for obtaining park sites, making park improvements and off-street parking.

For the enjoyment of thousands of Richmond children there are now available 93 acres of parks, 17 acres of playgrounds and 3 acres of playlots dispersed conveniently throughout city residential neighborhoods.

Also, a \$5,000 item is included in our Aquatic Park Fund, which is planned to be enlarged on a 50-50 matching basis with funds to be provided by the State under the Shoreline Recreational Development program. The Aquatic Park will consist of approximately 200 acres on our bay shoreline.

#### Pending Projects

Under study by our Planning Division and due to be completed in the coming year are investigations into many critical conditions now existing in our City, a few of which are:

Off-Street parking, downtown area

One-way street proposal and traffic study

Shoreline development master plan





## Pensions

Financing the existing pension systems for city employees is the most difficult financial problem before the City of Richmond today. The day is not too far away when more will be paid out than is being paid in. We must face this problem squarely and immediately.

Present rate of city-employee contributions are not on a pay-as-you-go basis. The table on the next page shows the trend of the contributions since the start of the pension systems.

Actuarial reports have been made to our Pension Boards, special studies have been presented, and in my budget message of last year, I stated, "Both of the systems were set up without regard to sound actuarial practice and the report of the outside actuary made at the end of ten years experience indicated that both must undergo sweeping changes in financing, benefits or both to prevent their becoming a direct burden on the taxpayer or the failure of the systems."

In order to meet the benefits promised, the City should right now be setting aside at least an additional \$75,000 per year for 20 years for the General Fund and from \$300,000 to \$450,000 per year for the Police and Fire Fund. To cite a similar experience, a neighboring city recently set out to bring their funds up to a proper reserve basis by allocating over \$1,000,000 in a three year period from their General Fund.

This method of allocation is one approach. If the attached budget followed this approach setting aside \$500,000, it would be necessary to raise property taxes an additional 50 cents. The reason this sum appears large now is that previous years were ignored, and for every year we continue to ignore this situation, the liability will increase. We are now working with the employees and the actuaries searching for a solution.

We will explore the possibilities of the State Retirement System or switching to a new locally-administered annuity-type plan offering sounder benefits than are now available.

If a new plan appears more attractive, a charter amendment may be proposed making it permissive to our present employees and mandatory to the new employees to join.

A full report will be made to you as soon as a thorough study can be completed. If it is agreed that we should then set aside a lump sum amount, we may very well have to rely on our operating cash reserve.

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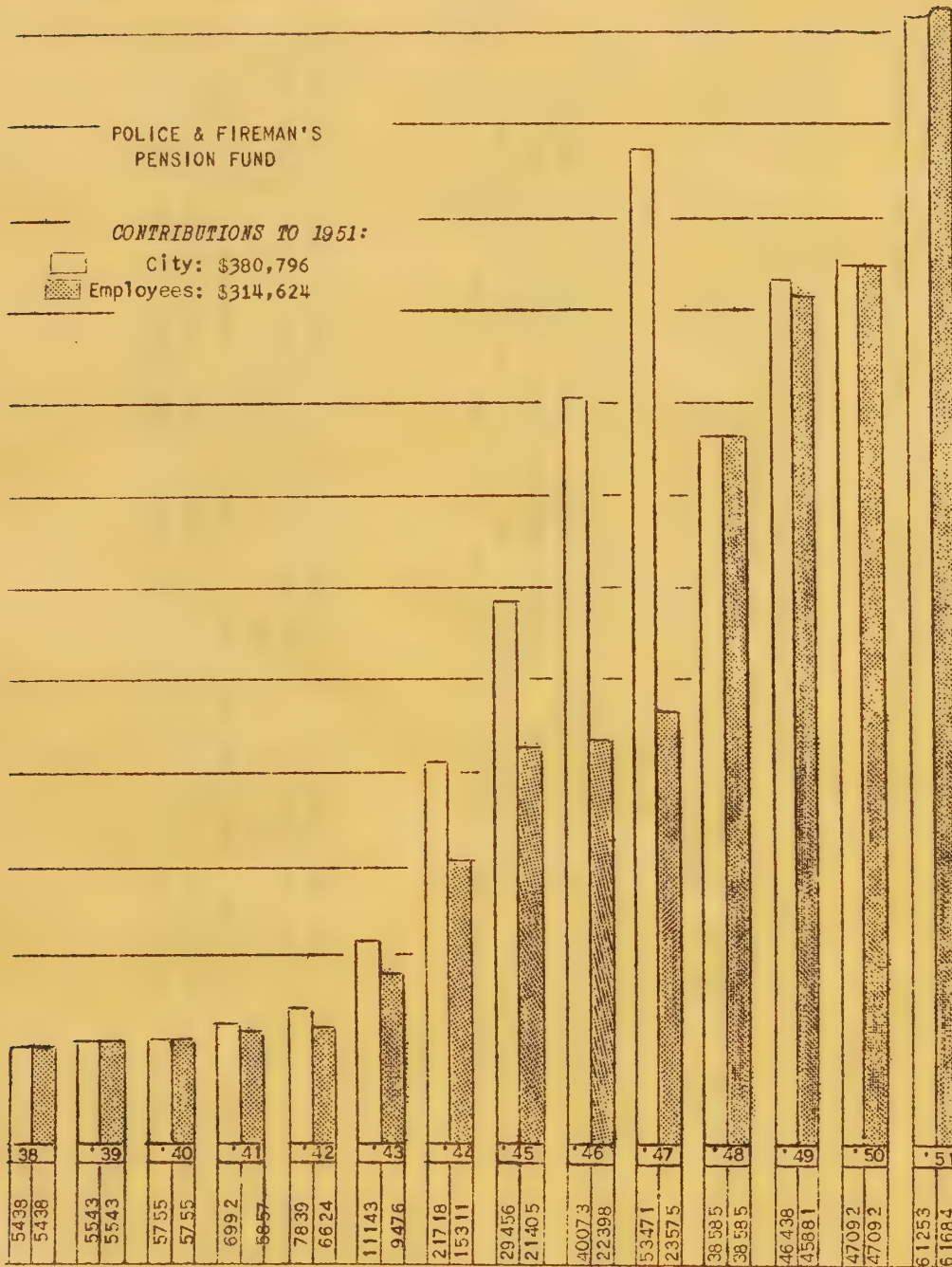
# ANNUAL CONTRIBUTIONS TO PENSION PLANS

RICHMOND, CALIFORNIA

## POLICE & FIREMAN'S PENSION FUND

### CONTRIBUTIONS TO 1951:

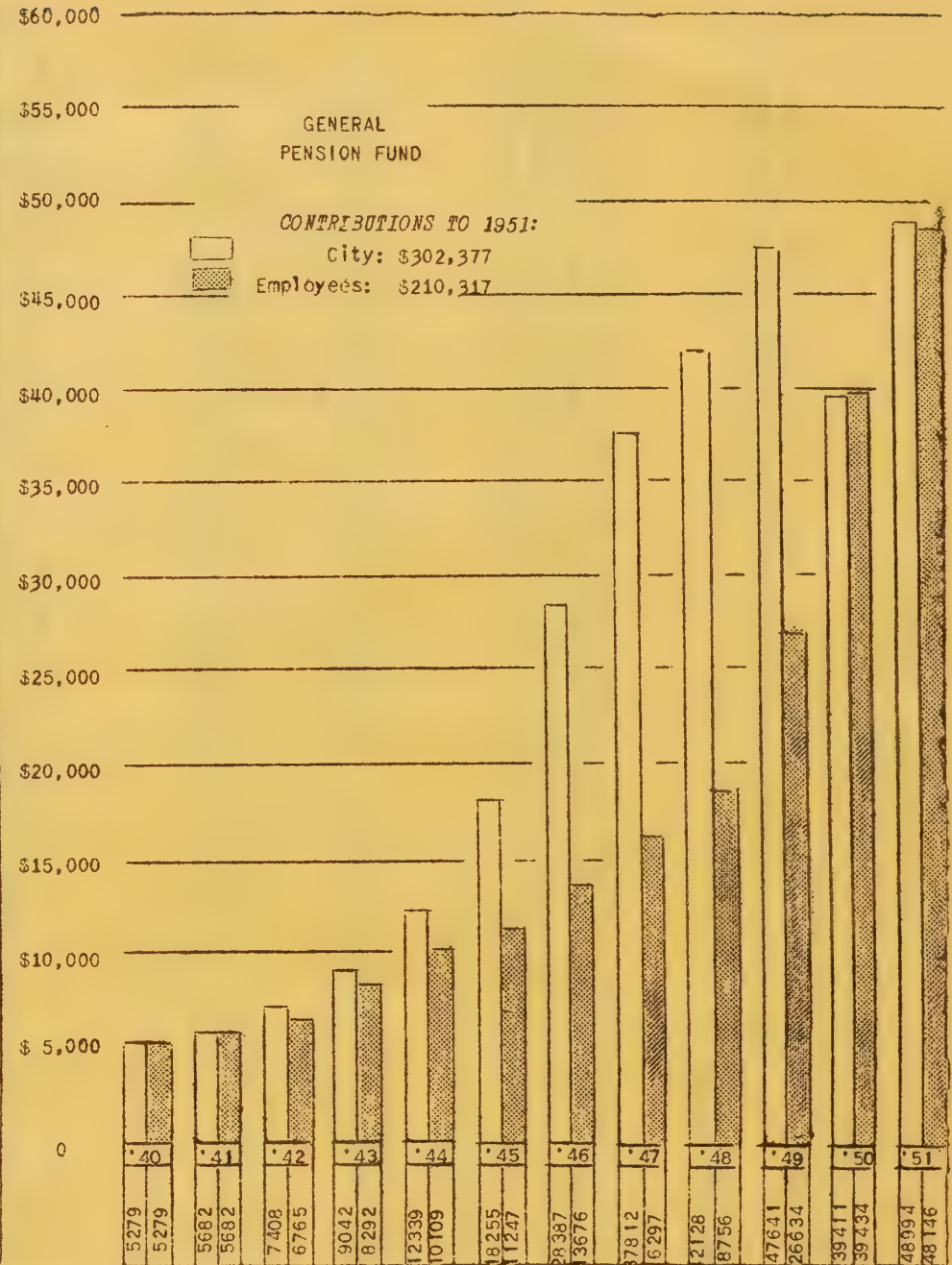
City: \$380,796  
Employees: \$314,624



## GENERAL PENSION FUND

### CONTRIBUTIONS TO 1951:

City: \$302,377  
Employees: \$210,317







## Police Court

As a result of a new Constitutional amendment a new law is now in effect transferring the cost of operating the police court to the County. This new law becomes effective as of January 1, 1952, at which time the City will no longer be required to budget for its operation. This means that there will be a decrease of \$18,000 in cost to the City as the budget requirements will be for a six-month period only.

## Public Health

Taking into consideration new sources of income developed this year and last year, the Health Department budget will approximate the same as expended in 1950-1951. Public Health and clinical services have been increased in the Health Department, the costs for which have been subsidized by the County Health Department and the United States Public Health Service.

Last year a laboratory contract with the County for performing County work brought in \$6,700 and continues this year. A second contract for V. D. clinical services has been approved this year for \$25,000 representing a \$10,000 yearly benefit for the city. The U.S. Public Health Service contract is for \$7,200 and pays for two public health nurses.

Although not a part of the Health Department budget, emergency ambulance services are of concern to us. Just as the emergency hospital services were shifted to the West Contra Costa Hospital District, we are also continuing attempts to shift emergency ambulance service.

## Redevelopment Agency

Federal financial assistance was made available during the year as a planning advance to cover Agency activities. A grant of Federal money has also been set aside for our Slum Clearance Program.

Fundamental economic studies of the community and market analysis are being made to determine type, character and quality of the market for residential and industrial development of the City.

## Salaries and Personnel

An allowance is made to cover salary adjustments and increases as may be granted when the Personnel Board reports its recommendations. The Board is presently conducting a comprehensive investigation into duties, rates and structures of all city employee classifications.

## School Fund

A 10% increase has been allowed the School Fund for school and playground supervision costs. This represents a per capita cost of approximately \$1.54.





It is recognized that this department needs more help to carry on projected recreation programs. One of our major endeavors this coming year will be to press for Federal Aid under funds made available by the passage of the Defense Housing Bill by Congress.

#### Telephone Costs

Indicative of the increased office activity in handling city business is the amount of our monthly telephone bill. To hold down any undue advance along this line, a department-to-department survey is being conducted to effect economies in the use of our telephone equipment.

#### Water Hydrants

Under a new procedure recently adopted by the East Bay Municipal Utility District, the City stands to save approximately \$23,000 next year as we no longer will have to rent our fire hydrants, but will pay a fixed installation cost of \$40 per hydrant.

#### Conclusion

In reviewing the past year's accomplishments, it is quite evident that it was one of the most progressive years in recent Richmond history. Foremost on the list, of course, is the completion of our four and one-half million dollar Civic Center which has the reputation of being the finest in America.

Another outstanding achievement was our successful campaign for a Richmond-San Rafael Bridge. The bill providing \$750,000 for the final plans and specifications for this bridge was passed and signed by the Governor. Bonds should be issued next year and construction started immediately thereafter. This will be a \$55,000,000 double-deck cantilever bridge which will make Richmond the Gateway to the Redwood Empire and will also make Richmond an even more attractive location for industry.

We were able to take advantage of Federal legislation and borrow \$160,000 for the final plans and specifications for our sewage disposal plant. Engineering work has already started on this.

During the year we acquired new automotive and laboratory equipment for the Police Department; constructed a modern drill tower, installed modern heating systems and purchased two 1250 gallon pumpers for the Fire Department; purchased new park sites; realized several important street improvements, and rights of way for future street improvements were acquired; purchased new equipment for our Auditing Department.

It is well to note that we continued to receive our fire and police assistance from FPHA during the past year. As you know, in





addition to our in lieu taxes, the Housing Authority pays for 22 firemen and 19 policemen. To date this assistance has amounted to over \$360,000 in savings to our Richmond taxpayers. Every year the amount saved increases by approximately \$167,000.

During the past five or six years certain changes in our policies have resulted in substantial benefits and savings to our taxpayers. Among the most important of these are:

1. The policy in regard to "fixing" traffic tickets. Our General Order No. 3 put this "no fix" policy into effect in February, 1946. Judge Leo Marcollo has conservatively estimated that this new policy has made an increase of \$12,000 in revenue per year which in the past five years has amounted to a savings of \$60,000.

2. Our Auditor reports that because of our request for a 1947 special census, which many people doubted would prove beneficial, we have received an additional \$71,460. This was figured on a basis of approximately \$9.00 for each additional citizen and, as you will recall, the census showed an increase of 7,781 citizens. We received this additional amount for the fiscal years of 1948 and 1949.

3. You will recall that because the Richmond Health Center was strictly a County function, we stopped supporting the Center in 1949. Today the cost of supporting this activity exceeds \$40,000 a year which would have been a cost to the Richmond taxpayer had we not changed our policy. This then represents a saving of approximately \$120,000.

4. The City of Richmond's campaign to have Highway 69 included in the State Highway system has also saved our taxpayers a substantial sum. Our Engineering Department estimates that maintenance costs for this highway have averaged \$35,000 each year. For the past five years this means a total saving of \$165,000.

5. Appreciable savings to our taxpayers were also realized by our policy of charging lot owners for the City weed-burning service. Over a period of five years since we changed the old policy, we have saved approximately \$30,000. No longer are our home owners paying for this special service to the lot owners.

6. Other items include the \$20,000 which is contributed to our Health Department by the County and also our insurance rebate which amounted to \$21,000 this year because of the fine safety program carried out by our employees' safety committee.

7. We are hopeful that a savings perhaps amounting to hundreds of thousands of dollars can result from our current program of strengthening our now-failing pension systems.

In addition to the aforementioned savings, we can mention one other outstanding reason for Richmond's ability to make so many capital improvements in the past few years and at the same time maintain the best in working conditions for our employees and that is the



addition to our 100,000, the Highway Authority pays for 25  
thousand and 10,000. To save this estimate has amounted to  
even \$300,000 in savings to our Highway Authority. Every year the  
amount saved increases by approximately \$100,000.

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1. The policy in regard to "fixing" traffic tickets. Our  
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the past five years has amounted to a savings of \$60,000.

2. Our Auditor reports that because of our request for a 1947  
special census, which many people doubted would prove beneficial,  
we have received an additional \$71,400. This was figured on a basis  
of approximately \$2.00 for each additional citizen and, as you will  
recall, the census showed an increase of 7,781 citizens. We received  
this additional amount for the fiscal years of 1946 and 1947.

3. You will recall that because the Richmond Health Center was  
effectively a County function, we stopped supporting the Center in 1945.  
Today the cost of supporting this activity exceeds \$20,000 a year,  
which would have been a cost to the Richmond taxpayer had we not  
changed our policy. This then represents a saving of approximately  
\$120,000.

4. The City of Richmond's campaign to have Highway 66 in-  
cluded in the State Highway system has also saved our taxpayers a  
substantial sum. Our engineering Department estimates that main-  
tenance costs for this highway have averaged \$32,000 each year. For  
the past five years this means a total saving of \$160,000.

5. Appreciable savings to our taxpayers were also realized  
by our policy of charging lot owners for the City weed-trimming  
service. Over a period of five years since we changed the old  
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amounted to \$21,000 this year because of the fine safety program  
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7. It is hopeful that a savings program amounting to four  
thousand of thousands of dollars can result from our current program  
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In addition to the aforementioned savings, we can mention one  
other outstanding reason for Richmond's ability to make so many capi-  
tal improvements in the past few years and at the same time maintain  
the best in working conditions for our employees and that is the



fact that we operate our departments more economically, i.e., with fewer employees, than other cities of comparable size.

This is true in most of our many departments, including fire, police, park, engineering, personnel, building maintenance, planning, assessor, auditing and purchasing departments and offices of the City Manager, City Attorney and City Clerk, a policy we will continue to follow consistent with efficient operating practices.

Very truly yours,

Wayne E. Thompson  
City Manager

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Aug 20, 1951

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City Manager

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